



MY LAST ADVENTURE.

GOLCONDA, Dec. 24, 1854.

Editor Cynthiana News:

Stu—the other morning while snugly ensconced between the blankets, with my senses steeped in dreamy forgetfulness, I was suddenly awakened by a gentle pull at my nose, accompanied with the words—

"My dear, the sun is certainly an hour high; hadn't you better get up?"

I opened first one eye and then the other, yawned, turned slightly over and threw my arms around my wife—for I am a married man, sir—and, kissing the nectar from her rosy lips, said, "No."

"But you must," said she, "breakfast is nearly ready, and there is not a teaspoonful of sugar in the house."

"Hun," said I, "what do I care for that? I can drink milk."

"But I can't," replied she, "I must have coffee, and sugar in it, of course."

"Pshaw! that's nothing; you can do without it for once; besides, I doubt very much whether any store is yet open."

"Mr. Rich, you know, opens his store quite early."

"Mr. Rich; fiddlesticks! he's asleep, and—"

"And here, sir, I again close my visual organs, and was about to become once more wrapped in Elysium, when my wife—restless little creature that she is—gave my shoulder an energetic shake, and, in a sharper tone of voice than she is wont to use, demanded—

"Do you refuse to go?"

"Certainly," replied I; "it is really out of the question—it is, indeed, a matter too trivial to—"

"Say not another word," said she, rising up in bed, "I can go myself."

"Hold, my dear!" exclaimed I, "I will go this instant."

And thereupon I leaped out hastily, dressed myself, and sallied forth. The air was keen and piercing, and I buttoned my paletot close up to the chin and hurried along over the frosty pavement, with a quick and heavy step. Just as I was turning a well known corner, I observed an old man, fifty-five or sixty years of age, dressed in a suit of black, with a wooden comforter twisted around his neck, crossing the street. When about half way across the street he suddenly stopped, and, fixing his eyes upon a small stone immediately before him, said—

"That is it—that's the great secret of happiness, the very object which is at this time kicking up such an intolerable uproar all over the world—and lo! I have found it here in the street!"

Having said which, he stooped down, picked up the stone and deposited it in his vest pocket. Not a little astonished at the singularity of the circumstance, I stepped up and asked—

"Sir, permit me to solicit from you an explanation of this, to me, inexplicable mystery connected with the small pebble which you have just placed in your pocket?"

"Sir," replied the old gentleman, turning round and fixing upon me a pair of oblique eyes, the expressions of which were indescribably keen and penetrating, "I perceive that you, like all other persons whose lives are devoted to the accumulation of wealth, are laboring under a mental hallucination, not more remarkable for its severity than for the very extraordinary but peculiar character of its origin."

"Indeed," replied I, "you speak in parables."

"Just as I expected," said he, as if soliloquizing to himself, "so long as the mind of man is wrapped in a perpetual mantle of obscurity, just so long will he be incapable of beholding things in their only true and legitimate light. Dissipate the fog of ignorance—remove this ancient cobwebbed veil of mystery, and he will perceive the glorious rays of truth streaming directly upon his hitherto darkened path. Not at all," continued he, looking up and speaking in a louder tone, "as I shall now proceed to convince you. Did you observe what I picked up?"

"It was a small stone, I believe."

"Indeed it was not," said he, drawing the identical stone from his pocket, and presenting it to me; "there, examine it yourself."

Taking it in my hand, I turned it over several times, and endeavored to discover some peculiarity in its composition that would afford a sufficient reason for not calling it a stone, but failing to perceive any, I returned it to him, saying, "I confess, sir, that I am wholly unable to perceive any quality about it that would warrant me in changing my opinion."

"Very true," replied he, "you solemnly believe it is a stone. Your belief, under the circumstances is perfectly natural, sustained, as it is, by the principle of reasoning adopted by mankind; but I tell you, a greater inconsistency—a more positive absurdity could not well exist."

"Pooh!" said I, "you are crazy. If not a stone pray what is it?"

"Casting a hurried glance around, as if to see whether any body was near, he bent forward and whispered—

"Gold!"

"Indeed," said I, "and by what process of prement logic do you propose to make that fact clear?"

"By the simplest in the world, sir. Will you please to accompany me to my room?"

My first impulse was to decline, but, upon reflecting a moment I resolved to go, for, as you are doubtless aware, sir, my curiosity was, by this time, highly excited, although I regarded the uncouth gentleman as nothing more than a downright fool or madman. So I replied—

"With pleasure, sir; lead the way?"

Proceeding to a frame-house immediately across the street, we entered a dirty looking room, containing one bed, a table, two chairs and a fire-place, in which were burning the fragments of what had apparently once been a water-glass. Having locked the door inside, the old gentleman hung the key upon a nail over the

mantle-piece, and then brought his foot smartly down upon the hearth stone, which sprung up like the lid of a watch, and disclosed a flight of steps leading down to a small cavity, walled up with brick and affording scarcely space enough to admit two persons standing upright. Upon reaching the bottom, I began wondering what would follow next, when I suddenly became aware that the floor or bottom of the cell in which we were standing, was sinking, and letting us down into a deep round hole in the earth. I was about to express my astonishment at this, when my eccentric conductor tapped me on the shoulder and remarked—

"Rather queer, isn't it?"

"Decidedly so," replied I, "I am at a loss to—"

But the sentence was cut short by the appearance of a light beneath us, and looking down I discovered that we were standing upon the top of a huge piston, which was gradually descending with us into a large and brilliantly lighted room. When it had reached a level with the floor, it stopped, and the old gentleman, stepping off, motioned me to a chair, saying—

"Pray be seated, and listen while I explain to you the mystery connected with the stone which you saw me pick up in the street. But," continued he, drawing a chair towards me, "before we proceed any further it will be necessary for you to solemnly promise, upon your word and honor as a man, that you will never inform any person of your visit to this place, nor reveal to any living mortal the secret which I am now about to confide to your keeping. Will you do this?"

I deliberated a few minutes and replied—

"I will."

"It is well for you that you have done so, resumed he, seating himself in the chair; "for if you had not you would never have been suffered to depart from this place alive. And now to commence—"

"This small stone has been used by me as a means to induce you to accompany me to this place. My object is to make to you certain disclosures, profiting by which you may hereafter, if you are so disposed, become as rich and powerful as you may desire. This room in which we are now sitting—the locality, my even existence of which is not suspected by any one in Golconda—is the counting room of the most extensive and successful counterfeiting establishment in the whole world. It was established in 18—

since which time it has been gradually extending itself and acquiring members, until it now affords employment to over 60,000 persons, and possesses nearly 2,000,000 members, a large portion of whom are respectable and influential citizens of the United States. This will not appear wonderful to you when I tell you that its issues are executed with such consummate, unparalleled skill, and its operations conducted with such perfect discretion and sagacity, and profound secrecy that detection is wholly impossible. To enable you to clearly understand this, I will give you a brief outline of the manner in which the business is prosecuted.

In the first place, I may mention that I am the only person in town belonging to the organization. I have resided, as you are doubtless aware in the house above for the last ten or twelve years, during which time I have acted in the capacity of messenger, or outside sentinel. My duties are to procure supplies for those below; assist them in entering and leaving the premises, to keep possession of the house above, and to perform various other similar services unnecessary to be mentioned. That red door which you see yonder, opens to a long passage leading to a large room in which from twenty to thirty persons are constantly engaged in the designing, engraving, filling out and inspecting of counterfeit bank notes, as well as in the manufacturing of counterfeit gold and silver coins. Not one of these persons are known in town; indeed, they are never sent here except when apparently stopping a few days at a hotel, which but rarely occurs, as they generally contrive to reach town after dark, and are not, therefore, compelled to loiter round through the day, watching for an opportunity to enter my house. In this way, seven or eight hundred persons have managed to visit the establishment during the last year without being observed by the citizens of Golconda. You remarked yesterday in Brown's drug store that you could not imagine how my small family consumed such a large quantity of provisions. You now know the reason. But let us hasten. Up to 1841, we had been eminently successful in our business, yet we were not safe from detection and exposure. All experience had taught us the downright folly and madness of uttering hastily gotten up counterfeits. Even the best imitations we had gotten up were easily detected by competent judges; and hence arose the necessity of carrying the art to a higher degree of perfection than it had ever before attained. To accomplish this, we procured, in 18—, several notes of different denominations on the Star-Bank of —, and placed them in the hands of five of our most skillful engravers, with instructions to carefully, critically, and minutely study their every feature and appearance with the unwearying application for one year. At the end of that time, each engraver proceeded to work and soon produced an imitation of the genuine notes. These imitations, although far better than such as were being daily detected by experienced judges, were, nevertheless, carefully compared with the genuine notes, the slightest difference noted, and then thrown aside, with directions to have new ones engraved. After repeating this experiment nine times we succeeded, in 18—, in producing a series of counterfeits that defied detection. I may defend detection; for, with a view to thoroughly test their features, we struck and filled out a few notes as soon as the plates were finished, placed an almost imperceptible mark upon each, and then, having mixed them with several new genuine notes, delivered the whole

to a committee of five—each of whom was a good judge of money, and had never before seen the imitations—with directions to separate the spurious from the genuine. After closely and diligently examining them for three days, they reported that the only difference which they had discerned between the notes, consisted in a small speck or dot, on the tree represented in the vignette as being cut down, on five of the notes, but that whether those which had that mark on them were the spurious or the genuine, they were wholly unable to determine. Of course, the mark referred to was the private one which we had placed on the spurious notes. But this was not the only proof we had of their being exact copies of the genuine. We soon discovered, to our inexpressible surprise and delight, that the two issues were so precisely alike, that it was absolutely impossible for even our engravers, pensmen, or any other persons in our establishment to detect the slightest difference between them. Well, sir, having achieved this great triumph of skill, we were not slow, as you may readily imagine, in availing ourselves of the advantages it afforded us. We immediately commenced sending our issues into the world. We despatched agents, loaded down with them, to every nook and corner of the country, instructed to turn them into gold or good paper as soon as possible. In one month we accumulated over \$879,000, and in the last six months we have cleared over \$13,000,000, besides making for every person in our employ an independent fortune. We now keep our presses running day and night striking off our issues, and seventeen persons constantly engaged in filling them out, whilst our agents are travelling through the U. S. in every direction, dealing in stocks, real estate, steamboats, horses, cattle, hogs, and, in fact every thing that will enable them to transform the spurious notes into gold. And now, sir," continued the old gentleman, slapping me familiarly on the knee, "for reasons unnecessary to be mentioned, we desire to have an agent or member of our fraternity in Golconda, and having inferred from certain little financial operations which you have performed during the past two or three years, that you could conscientiously permit your ambition to extend to objects of greater importance, we have concluded to offer the situation to you."

"Sir," said I, endeavoring to recover from the surprise and astonishment with which his narration and sudden proposition had overwhelmed me, "your opinion of my character is evidently based on false pretences. I am wholly unconscious of having performed any act that would induce you to make such a proposition—and I am certain—"

"What," exclaimed he, rising and taking the stone from his pocket, "do you mean to say that you refuse to become a member of our organization?"

"I do?"

"Take that then," said he, hurling at my head the stone, which struck me with such tremendous force in the forehead, that I opened my eyes to their widest extent and—discovered my wife standing beside the bed with the broomstick poised above my head.

"The deuce!" said I, "it's all a dream."

"No it is not," replied she, again thrashing my head with the broomstick, "the servant brought the sugar an hour ago, and here I have been waiting and waiting!"

And the truth is, sir, I had been sound asleep, and it was all a dream—madam's assertion to the contrary, notwithstanding.

Yours decidedly, JOHN JENKINS.

A Tough Yarn.

There is a place in Maine so rocky that when the down-easters plant corn they look for crevices in the rocks, and shoot the grins in with a musket; they can't raise ducks there, no how, for the stones are so thick the ducks can't get their bills between them to pick up the grass-hoppers, and the only way the sheep can get at the sprigs of grass, is by grinding their noses on a grindstone.

But that ain't a circumstance to a locality on the Eastern Shore; there land is so poor, that it takes two kildears to say "kildear," and on a clear day you can see the grass hoppers climb upon a mullen stalk and look with tears in their eyes over a fifty acre field; and the humble bees have to go down on their knees to get at the grass; all the musquitoes die of starvation, and the turkey buzzards had to emigrate.

But there is a county in Virginia, that can beat that. There the land is so sterile that when the wind is at the north-west they have to tie their children to keep them from being blown away; there it takes six frogs to see a man, and when the dogs bark they have to lean against fences; the horses are so thin that it takes twelve of them to make a shadow, and when they kill a deer they have to hold him up to knock him down.

Poor inducements are certainly held out to emigrants to the above localities. But, we knew a toad that had fattened "on the vapors of a dungeon," in the county in Virginia referred to, which was unable to croak on the second, and demised on the third day after its arrival in one of the pine hill counties of North Carolina.

The Last Yankee Story.—A lady passing through New Hampshire, observed the following notice on a board:—Horses taken into grass. Long tails three shillings and sixpence, short tails two shillings. The lady asked the owner of the land the reason for the difference of price. He answered, "You see, ma'am, the long tails can brush away the flies, but the short tails are so tormented by them that they can hardly eat at all."

MAYSVILLE AND LEXINGTON RAILROAD. The Receiver, Eben Milton, Esq., appointed by an order of the Fayette Circuit Court, to take charge of the effects of the Maysville and Lexington railroad company, proceeded to the execution of his trust on Monday last, and on Tuesday (yesterday) that portion of the road lying between this city and Paris was leased by him to the Covington and Lexington railroad company. The extent of the lease is eight months—the sum paid, \$1250 per month; the first five months' rent to be expended in putting the road in perfect running order. It is the intention of the Covington company to widen the gauge at once so as to correspond with their gauge and enable them to run through from Covington to this city, without break. The contract was closed yesterday. [Lexington Observer.]

A gentleman who recently met a boy on horseback, crying with cold, said to the lad, "Why don't you get down and lead your horse awhile; that's the way to get warm." "It is a borrowed horse," replied the lad, "and I'll ride it if I freeze."

The Troy Daily Times says that a clergyman of that city married a young couple one evening last week. After the ceremony had been performed one of the groomsmen slyly handed the reverend gentleman the following note, containing a ten dollar bill, as his "fee" for tying the knot:—"My very dear sir—You did me up brown last evening, and I thank you for the very agreeable manner in which you performed the service of either rendering me one of the happiest or one of the most miserable and unfortunate of beings. I sincerely trust and believe the latter will be the case. My wife, that is Mrs. —, is also duly grateful for your instrumentality in making her what she so long desired to be—a wife; but she doesn't care a fig whether she's happy or not—she's got a man now, and that is enough."

Please accept the enclosed \$10 bill. The tightness of the money market prevents a heavier remittance. I will, however, enter into an arrangement with you. My wife and myself intend to see what can be done in the way of assisting along Barnum's baby shoe next summer. If we get a prize, we'll divide the profits with you.

Yours, matrimonially, —."

LOVE AND LAW.—A young lawyer, who had paid his court to a young lady without much advancing his suit, accused her one day of being insensible of "the power of love."

"It does not follow," she archely replied, "that I am so because I am not to be won by 'the power of attorney.'"

A Nice Crow.

A somewhat fond and jealous wife, whose suspicions of peacocks had been cavalierly met by her husband stopping her mouth with the saying, "O, that is a nice crow for you to pick," came at last to her dying bed, round which stood her mourning spouse and fine young family. Heaving a heavy sigh, she thus addressed the former:—"My dearest Charles, I cannot depart in peace without confiding to you the secret of an inconstancy—the only one of which I was ever guilty towards you—but—but it shocks me to confess that one of these dear children is not yours."

"Heavens!" exclaimed the maddened husband, "which of them is it that does not call me father?"

"That," replied the fainting wife, rallying her last breath for the effort, "that is a nice crow for you to pick!"

A wine merchant once left a suspected assistant in his cellar, and said to him, "Now, lest you should drink the wine while I am away, I will chalk your mouth so that I may know it." He then rubbed his nail across the man's lips, and pretended to leave the mark of chalk on them. The man drank of the wine, and to be even with his master, chalked his mouth, and thus discovered himself.

A Smart Boy.

"Well, sonny, whose pigs are those?" "Old sonny's, sir."

"Whose sow is it?" "Our old man's, sir."

"Well, then, who is your old man?" "If you'll mind the pigs, I'll run home and ask the old woman."

"Never mind, sonny, I want a smart boy: what can you do?" "Oh! I can do more than considerate. I milk the geese, ride the turkeys to water, hamstring the grass-hoppers, light fires for flies to court by, cut the buttons off dad's coat when he's at prayers, keep tally for dad and mam when they scold at a mark—old woman is always ahead?"

"Got any brothers?" "Lots of 'em—all named Bill, except Bob—his name's Sam; my name's Larry, but they call me Lazy Lawrence for shortness."

"Well, you're most too smart for me!" "Travel on, old stick-in-the-mud, I shan't hire you for a boss to-day!"

DIRECTORY.

I. O. O. F. HARRISON LODGE, No. 75, I. O. O. F. meets at its Hall, Miller's corner, in the old story—entrance on Pike st., every Saturday night at 8 o'clock. Transient members are invited to attend. By order of the lodge, I. T. MARTIN, Jan 1-29-1857 Recording Secretary.

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